

DETAILED ACTION

Applicant's amendment filed October 20, 2009 is acknowledged. Claims 57 and 59 are amended, claim 58 is cancelled, and claim 83 is newly added. Claims 57, 59-77, 83 are pending and further considered on the merits.

Response to Amendment

In response to the amendments, the examiner withdraws the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejections of claims 57, 59-77, and 83 made in the office action dated May 21, 2009.

Examiner's Amendment

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Steve Bondura on March 29, 2010.

The application has been amended as follows:

59. The equipment as in claim ~~58~~57, wherein said vertically oriented sieve and said horizontally oriented sieve are any one of a perforated plate, mesh member, or strainer.

Allowable Subject Matter

1. **Claims 57, 59-77, and 83** allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the closest prior art, namely Ookata, US 6284135 (Ookata) teaches a wastewater treatment apparatus (abstract) comprising a membrane module (REF 52, fig. 2) and an aeration member (REF 61, fig. 2). Ookata fails to disclose or obviate a horizontally oriented sieve disposed between a wash chamber and the membrane module and a vertically oriented sieve at a wastewater infeed of the membrane module. For these reasons, the examiner considers claim 57 to be novel and non-obvious.
3. Claims 59-77 and 83, for depending variously from claim 57 are also novel for at least the reasons set forth above.

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Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DIRK BASS whose telephone number is (571) 270-7370. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri (9am-4pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vickie Kim can be reached on (571) 272-0579. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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